

## TIMBER.

The production of the main varieties of timber in the Dominion for the past nine years (ending at 31st March) is given in the following table:—

Year ended 31st March,	Total.	Kauri.	Rimu.	White-pine.	Matai.	Totara.	Others.
	Sup. ft.	Sup. ft.	Sup. ft.	Sup. ft.	Sup. ft.	Sup. ft.	Sup. ft.
1923 ..	304,351,877	22,460,759	155,627,936	66,088,219	23,747,049	20,843,718	15,584,196
1924 ..	317,069,216	19,743,196	181,093,581	56,699,443	24,326,148	18,904,361	16,302,487
1925 ..	344,094,874	22,891,535	195,572,705	65,572,439	23,947,707	18,509,551	17,600,937
1926 ..	353,224,196	22,765,877	195,451,758	75,634,869	26,141,027	14,109,576	19,121,089
1927 ..	305,675,258	18,474,981	170,498,282	65,490,059	19,380,469	14,179,462	17,652,005
1928 ..	269,783,000	15,874,000	156,314,000	53,736,000	15,207,000	15,728,000	17,924,000
1929 ..	270,214,420	10,742,967	156,239,992	56,790,306	15,752,744	8,610,639	22,077,772
1930 ..	282,405,173	10,471,297	163,293,288	58,505,364	17,972,243	9,046,159	23,116,822
1931 ..	229,468,022	8,943,480	124,998,825	49,009,109	13,917,187	9,467,697	23,131,724

The above statistics show that the production of timber decreased by approximately 53,000,000 superficial feet during the 1930-31 period, a decline of 18·8 per cent. The number of sawmillers engaged in the production of rough-sawn timber shows an increase of 9, the relative figures being 305 in 1930 and 314 in 1931.

Employment figures show a substantial decrease in the number of workers engaged in sawmills, and for comparative purposes the following figures are submitted: 1927-28, 6,405; 1928-29, 6,264; 1929-30, 6,504; 1930-31, 5,612.

The export trade for the year under review showed a substantial reduction of 9,373,318 ft. in quantity and £128,221 in value compared with that of 1930. The relative figures show the position as follows: 1929—Quantity, 39,098,568 ft.; value, £439,299. 1930—Quantity, 26,726,318 ft.; value, £301,131. 1931—Quantity, 17,353,000; value, £172,910. Six months ended 30th June, 1932—Quantity, 13,427,000 ft.; value, £127,650.

The figures for the six months ended 30th June, 1932, indicate that the yearly figures for the current year will show a substantial increase on the figures of 1931. This increase is due mainly to a revival of the timber-export trade with Australia, which is shown when the export figures for the six months ended 30th June, 1931, are compared with the same period of this year. The relative statistics are:—

Six months ended—	Quantity. Sup. ft.	Value. £
30th June, 1931 .. ..	6,304,320	65,214
30th June, 1932 .. ..	12,908,586	120,815
	<u>6,604,266</u>	<u>£55,601</u>
Percentage of increase .. ..	105	85

All classes of timber show an increase in quantity exported to this market, white-pine showing the greatest increase, by 5,885,579 sup. ft. The following table shows in thousands of superficial feet the quantities of imported timber that directly competes with New Zealand native timber:—

—	1928.	1929.	1930.	1931.	1932 (Six months).
	(1,000 ft.)	(1,000 ft.)	(1,000 ft.)	(1,000 ft.)	(1,000 ft.)
Cedar .. ..	2,066	1,336	637	52	7
Oregon .. ..	16,713	16,188	12,807	2,950	604
Hemlock .. ..	4,903	4,108	6,142	662	2
Redwood .. ..	7,478	11,678	9,345	1,028	113
Butter-box shooks	2,006	3,147	4,691	2,879	447
Cheese-crate shooks	785	1,373	1,774	732	166
Total .. ..	33,951	37,830	35,396	8,303	1,339

It will be seen that imports in 1931 fell to approximately one-fourth of the total shown for 1930.

It was reported last year that the requirements of the 1931-32 season for export-fruit cases would be supplied to a large extent from local sources, replacing the quantity previously imported.